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AR INFORMATION SERIES

5 August, 1917

A WAR OF SELF-DEFENSE

By

ROBERT LANSING
SECRETARY OF STATE
and
LOUIS F. POST
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR

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AMERICA'S FUTURE AT STAKE.

BY ROBERT LANSING,

Secretary of State.

We must all realize that we are living in the most momentous time in all history, in a time when the lives and destinies of nations are in the balance, when even the civilization, which has taken centuries to build, may crumble before the terrible storm which is sweeping over Europe. We are not only living in this critical period but we, as a nation, have become a participant in the struggle. Having cast our lot on the side of the powers allied against the Imperial German Government, we will put behind our decision the full power and the resources of the Republic. We intend to win in this mighty conflict, and we will win because our cause is the cause of justice and of right and of humanity.

I wonder how many of us comprehend what the outcome of this war means to mankind, or, to bring it nearer to each one of us, what it means to our country. I sometimes think that there prevail very erroneous impressions as to the reasons why we entered the war—not the immediate reasons, but the deep, underlying reasons which affect the life and future of the United States and of all other liberty-loving nations throughout the world.

Of course, the immediate cause of our war against Germany was the announced purpose of the German Government to break its promises as to indiscriminate submarine warfare and the subsequent renewal of that ruthless method of destruction with increased vigor and brutality.

While this cause was in itself sufficient to force us to enter the war if we would preserve our self-respect, the German Government's deliberate breach of faith and its utter disregard of right and life had a far deeper meaning, a meaning which had been growing more evident as the war had progressed and which needed but this act of perfidy to bring it home to all thinking Americans. The evil char-

acter of the German Government is laid bare before the world. We know now that that Government is inspired with ambitions which menace human liberty, and that to gain its end it does not hesitate to break faith, to violate the most sacred rights, or to perpetrate intolerable acts of inhumanity.

It needed but the words reported to have been uttered by the German Chancellor to complete the picture of the character of his Government when he announced that the only reason why the intensified submarine campaign was delayed until February last was that sufficient submarines could not be built before that time to make the attacks on commerce effective. Do you realize that this means, if it means anything, that the promises to refrain from brutal submarine warfare, which Germany had made to the United States, were never intended to be kept, that they were only made in order to gain time in which to build more submarines, and that when the time came to act the German promises were unhesitatingly torn to pieces like other "scraps of paper."

It is this disclosure of the character of the Imperial German Government which is the underlying cause of our entry into the war. We had doubted, or at least many Americans had doubted, the evil purposes of the rulers of Germany. Doubt remained no longer. In the light of events we could read the past and see that for a quarter of a century the absorbing ambition of military oligarchy which was the master of the German Empire was for world dominion. Every agency in the fields of commerce, industry, science, and diplomacy had been directed by the German Government to this supreme end. Philosophers and preachers taught that the destiny of Germany was to rule the world, thus preparing the mind of the German people for the time when the mighty engine which the German Government had constructed should crush all opposition and the German Emperor should rule supreme.

For nearly three years we have watched the conduct of the Imperial Government, and we have learned more and more of the character of that Government and of its aims. We came very slowly to a realizing sense that not only was the freedom of the European nations at stake but that

liberty throughout the world was threatened by the powerful autocracy which was seeking to gratify its vast ambition.

Not impulsively but with deliberation the American people reached the only decision which was possible from the standpoint of their own national safety. Congress declared that a state of war existed between the United States and the Imperial Government of Germany, and this country united with the other liberal nations of the earth to crush the power which sought to erect on the ruins of democracy a world empire greater than that of Greece or Rome or the caliphs.

The President has said, with the wonderful ability which he has to express aptly a great thought in a single phrase, that "the world must be made safe for democracy." In that thought there is more than the establishment of liberty and self-government for all nations—there is in it the hope of an enduring peace.

I do not know in the annals of history an instance where a people, with truly democratic institutions, permitted their government to wage a war of aggression, a war of conquest. Faithful to their treaties, sympathetic with others seeking self-development, real democracies, whether monarchial or republican in their forms of government, desire peace with their neighbors and with all mankind.

Were every people on earth able to express their will, there would be no wars of aggression, and, if there were no wars of aggression, then there would be no wars, and lasting peace would come to this earth. The only way that a people can express their will is through democratic institutions. Therefore, when the world is made safe for democracy, when that great principle prevails, universal peace will be an accomplished fact.

No nation or people will benefit more than the United States when that time comes. But it has not yet come. A great people, ruled in thought and word, as well as in deed, by the most sinister Government of modern times, is straining every nerve to supplant democracy by the autocracy which they have been taught to worship. When will the German people awaken to the truth? When will they arise in their might and cast off the yoke and become their own masters? I fear that it will not be until the physical might

of the united democracies of the world has destroyed forever the evil ambitions of the military rulers of Germany and liberty triumphs over its archenemy.

And yet in spite of these truths which have been brought to light in these last three years I wonder how many Americans feel that *our* democracy is in peril, that *our* liberty needs protection, that the United States is in *real* danger from the malignant forces which are seeking to impose their will upon the world, as they have upon Germany and her deceived allies.

Let us understand once for all that this is no war to establish an abstract principle of right. It is a war in which the future of the United States is at stake. If any among you has the idea that we are fighting others' battles and not our own, the sooner he gets away from that idea the better it will be for him, the better it will be for all of us.

Imagine Germany victor in Europe because the United States remained neutral. Who then, think you, would be the next victim of those who are seeking to be masters of the whole earth? Would not this country with its enormous wealth arouse the cupidity of an impoverished though triumphant Germany? Would not this democracy be the only obstacle between the autocratic rulers of Germany and their supreme ambition? Do you think that they would withhold their hand from so rich a prize?

Let me then ask you, would it be easier or wiser for this country single-handed to resist a German Empire, flushed with victory and with great armies and navies at its command, than to unite with the brave opponents of that Empire in ending now and for all time this menace to our future?

Primarily, then, every man who crosses the ocean to fight on foreign soil against the armies of the German Emperor goes forth to fight for his country and for the preservation of those things for which our forefathers were willing to die. To those who thus offer themselves we owe the same debt that we owe to those men who in the past fought on American soil in the cause of liberty. No, not the same debt, but a greater one. It calls for more patriotism, more self-denial, and a truer vision to wage war on distant shores than to repel an invader or defend one's home. I, therefore, congratulate you, young men, in your choice of service. You

have done a splendid thing. You have earned already the gratitude of your countrymen and of generations of Americans to come. Your battle flags will become the cherished trophies of a nation which will never forget those who bore them in the cause of liberty.

I know that some among you may consider the idea that Germany would attack us, if she won this war, to be improbable; but let him who doubts remember that the improbable, yes, the impossible, has been happening in this war from the beginning. If you had been told prior to August, 1914, that the German Government would disregard its solemn treaties and send its armies into Belgium, would wantonly burn Louvain, would murder defenseless people, would extort ransoms from conquered cities, would carry away men and women into slavery, would, like vandals of old, destroy some of history's most cherished monuments, and would with malicious purpose lay waste the fairest fields of France and Belgium, you would have indignantly denied the possibility. You would have exclaimed that Germans, lovers of art and learning, would never permit such foul deeds. To-day you know that the unbelievable has happened, that all these crimes have been committed, not under the impulse of passion, but under official orders.

Again, if you had been told before the war that German submarine commanders would sink peaceful vessels of commerce and send to sudden death men, women, and little children, you would have declared such scientific brutality to be impossible. Or, if you had been told that German aviators would fly over thickly populated cities scattering missiles of death and destruction with no other purpose than to terrorize the innocent inhabitants, you would have denounced the very thought as unworthy of belief and as a calumny upon German honor. Yet, God help us, these things have come to pass, and iron crosses have rewarded the perpetrators.

But there is more, far more, which might be added to this record of unbelievable things which the German Government has done. I only need to mention the attempt of the foreign office at Berlin to bribe Mexico to make war upon us by promising her American territory. It was only one of many intrigues which the German Government was carrying on

in many lands. Spies and conspirators were sent throughout the world. Civil discord was encouraged to weaken the potential strength of nations which might be obstacles to the lust of Germany's rulers for world mastery. Those of German blood who owed allegiance to other countries were appealed to to support the fatherland, which beloved name masked the military clique at Berlin.

Some day I hope that the whole tale may be told. It will be an astounding tale indeed. But enough has been told so that there no longer remains the shadow of a doubt as to the character of Germany's rulers, of their amazing ambition for world empire, and of their intense hatred for democracy.

The day has gone by when we can measure possibilities by past experiences or when we believe that any physical obstacle is so great or any moral influence is so potent as to cause the German autocracy to abandon its mad purpose of world conquest.

It was the policy of those who plotted and made ready for the time to accomplish the desire of the German rulers to lull into false security the great nations which they intended to subdue, so that when the storm broke they would be unprepared. How well they succeeded you know. But democracy no longer sleeps. It is fully awake to the menace which threatens it. The American people, trustful and friendly, were reluctant to believe that imperialism again threatened the peace and liberty of the world. Conviction came to them at last, and with it prompt action. The American Nation arrayed itself with the other great democracies of the earth against the genius of evil which broods over the destinies of central Europe.

No thought of material gain and no thought of material loss impelled this action. Inspired by the highest motives American manhood prepared to risk all for the right. I am proud of my country. I am proud of my countrymen. I am proud of our national character. With lofty purpose, with patriotic fervor, with intense earnestness the American democracy has drawn the sword, which it will not sheathe until the baneful forces of absolutism go down defeated and broken.

Who can longer doubt—and there have been many who have doubted in these critical days—the power of that eternal spirit of freedom which lives in every true American heart?

I am firmly convinced that the independence of no nation is safe, that the liberty of no individual is sure, until the military despotism which holds the German people in the hollow of its hand has been made impotent and harmless forever. Appeals to justice, to moral obligation, to honor, no longer avail with such a power. There is but one way to restore peace to the world, and that is by overcoming the physical might of German imperialism by force of arms.

For its own safety, as well as for the cause of human liberty, this great Republic is marshaling its armies and preparing with all its vigor to aid in ridding Germany, as well as the world, of the most ambitious and most unprincipled autocracy which has arisen to stay the wheels of progress and imperil Christian civilization.

It is to this great cause you, who are present here to-night, like thousands of other loyal Americans, have dedicated yourselves. Upon each one of you much depends. You are going forth into foreign lands, not only as guardians of the flag of your country and of the liberties of your countrymen, but as guardians of the national honor of the United States. American character will be judged by your conduct; American spirit by your deeds. As you maintain yourselves courageously and honorably, so will you bring glory to the flag which we all love as the emblem of our national unity and independence.

I know that it is unnecessary to emphasize the responsibilities which will rest upon you as you lead the men under your command. To their officers they will look for guidance and example, not only in the battle line, but in the camp and on the march. Your responsibilities are great. As you meet them so will your services be measured by your country.

It is in the toil and danger of so great an adventure as you are soon to experience that a man's true character will become manifest. He will be brought face to face with the realities. The little things which once engrossed his thought and called forth his energies will be forgotten in the stern events of his new life. The sternness of it all will not deprive him of the satisfaction which comes from doing his

best. As he found gratification and joy in the peaceful pursuits of the old life, so will he find a deeper gratification and greater joy in serving his country loyally and doing his part in molding the future aright.

And, when your task is completed, when the grim days of battle are over, and you return once more to the quiet life of your profession or occupation, which you have so generously abandoned at your country's call, you will find in the gratitude of your countrymen an ample reward for the great sacrifice which you have made.

If enthusiasm and ardor can make success sure, then we, Americans, have no cause for anxiety, no reason to doubt the outcome of the conflict. But enthusiasm and ardor are not all, they must be founded on a profound conviction of the righteousness of our cause and on an implicit faith that the God of Battles will strengthen the arm of him who fights for the right. In the time of stress and peril, when a man stands face to face with death in its most terrible forms, God will not desert him who puts his trust in Him. It is at such a time that the eternal verities will be disclosed. It is then, when you realize that existence is more than this life and that over our destinies watches an all-powerful and compassionate God, you will stand amidst the storm of battle unflinching and unafraid.

There is no higher praise that can be bestowed upon a soldier of the Republic than to say that he served his country faithfully and trusted in his God. Such I earnestly hope will be the praise to which each one of you will be entitled when peace returns to this suffering earth, and mankind rejoices that the world is made safe for democracy.

THE GERMAN ATTACK.[1]

BY LOUIS F. POST,

Assistant Secretary of Labor.

The United States has gone into the world war in self-defense. Other purposes are more ideal and also just; but this is the cause that gives us our warrant of war by even the narrowest rules of international orderliness which civilization has yet evolved. We are resisting armed invasion. The necessity for it is evident from the most familiar facts of German history. For half a century German empire builders have made no secret of their policy of world conquest. For the past three years the German Government has given to their policy of world conquest vigorous life in Belgium and in France. And when that policy and those invasions are considered in connection with the defiant and death-dealing assaults by the German Government upon the sovereignty of the United States in February and March, 1917, the defensive necessity of our entering the war is demonstrated.

Historically, those culminating events hark back to the Franco-Prussian War. That struggle of nearly half a century ago, provoked by Bismarck with a trick as all the world now knows, was the initial grand play in the Prussian military game for world empire. At its close the Prussian plans for larger conquests began taking on distinctive shape. They had developed out of a political philosophy which emphasizes the autocratic doctrine of *duties* in opposition to the democratic doctrine of *rights*. Elsewhere the doctrine of rights, which had inspired historic revolts against feudalistic régimes of obedience, was becoming hospitable to the idea of a natural balance of rights and duties—rights to life, for instance, in balance with corresponding duties to let live.

[1] Revised and reprinted from *The Public*, July 27 and August 3.

But in Prussianized Germany the feudal principle of duty to superiors in station was revived as a new discovery and invested with new sanctions.

German projectors of a world empire—philosophers, militarists, historians, scholars, statesmen, courtiers—set about the inculcation, not always by logic or gentle persuasion, of autocratic theories of duty as the supreme obligation of men. Distorted echoes of those teachings were often heard in American universities and from American platforms in discouragement of democratic progress here. These American echoes usually stressed the obligation as one between individuals, which is after all not so very different essentially from the principle of a balance of duties and rights. But this was not the thought that the molders of Prussian empire stressed. The essence of their theory of duties is militaristic. It implies a duty of obedience to the word of command. It requires subordination at all times and in all things to "the state," which, in the Prussianistic imagination, is personified by the Kaiser. Exalting "the state" as the prime object of individual devotion and the Kaiser as its visible deity, these Prussian promotors of despotism established, almost in the center of Europe and in an age of developing democracy, a reactionary empire of "divine right," which they dedicated to a world-conquering purpose.

Though the King of Prussia by "divine right" of birth is German Kaiser only by constitutional derivation, this makes no difference. The German constitution is of a texture and the despotic Prussian spirit of a character to invest the Kaiser with the King's inherited divinity. There is, to be sure, a constitutional parliament for Germany; but it is ruled by an imperial chancellor responsible to the Kaiser, whose appointment he holds, whose purposes he serves, and who can dismiss him at will. Except for a fragile right of veto, it has no more legislative power than a village debating society. In Prussian municipal governments, too, the Kaiser controls the governing officials. Nor is this autocratic "state" political alone. It is also supreme in its influence upon education and morals. Children's minds are molded by its educational processes in accordance with the Government's conception of what is best for "the state"—not for the child, unless by lucky coincidence, but for "the

state." Like its political adjustments, the Prussianized educational machinery is pyramided up to the Kaiser. From elementary schools its wheels revolve with automatic regularity and mechanical precision through higher schools and universities to a place in the exquisitely geared machinery of "the state," at which all is moved and mastered by the Kaiser's touch of a governmental button. The Kaiser himself is under the influence of a dominant caste—agrarian and military—of which, in virtue of his birth, he is the most worshipful grandmaster.

Caste gradations are characteristic of this mystical German "state." To the Prussianistic institutions of Germany they are what democracy is to countries more advanced in civilization—the spirit of the place, the thought to conjure with, the sign to conquer by. They do not belong with those mere survivals of caste which distort the democracy of other countries, but are a system of caste government which is cultivated as a social and political necessity and as one of the indispensable factors of "kultur." The German child is educated for the caste in which he is born. Prejudices of higher toward lower grades of caste and subserviency from the lower to the higher are sedulously fostered for "state" reasons. University professors are flanged for caste grooves. Clergymen and school teachers are congealed in caste molds. Workingmen are graded off and graded through by caste variations. Women are strait-jacketed in castes of sex, appendant in series to the caste levels of their respective men folk. And complexities of military caste, interweaved with a land-nobility caste, rule the others — subject, of course, to the Kaiser, who is at the apex of these caste gradations.

Out of it all has come a stupendous social and political machine. Individual impulses have been ossified and moral perceptions inverted. Even the scientific and the religious groups have been shaped on caste lines. And this machine is efficient. No blame to such as worship efficiency for the sake of efficiency if they bow the head and bend the knee at the altars of the German system. There are those, however, who value efficiency not for its own sake but for the sake of the worthiness of its objects and the usefulness of its accomplishments. To such as these the prospect of

a world-wide imposition of a Prussianistic "state" by military conquest is not inviting. It would be abhorrent to every democratic instinct and at variance with every democratic thought.

Yet precisely that purpose has been the manifest object of German efficiency. In so far as it has served useful ends in social life those ends have been served as incidents to the purpose of world conquest. Except in so far as the efficiency has been for the mere sake of being efficient, or for the sake of subordinating the German people—body, mind, and soul—to the dominion of a caste-bound "state," its unconcealed design has been to make military conquest of the rest of mankind. The Prussianized German Government coveted "a place in the sun" where its shadow would hang over all the earth; and efficiency for military conquest was its method. Conquest was not the purpose of the masses of the German people. But it was the purpose of their ruling caste and its royal chief; and the German people, obsessed with Prussian "kultur," were an impotent factor in giving political form to their instinctive love of democracy and peace. So the Government of Germany has, for purposes of world conquest, been able to devote years of time and volumes of human energy to making marvelously efficient a gigantic war machine. By inculcating an automatic sense of duty to "the state," through the ramifications of mechanized "kultur," and developing a spirit of military conquest as a necessity of normal German life and national existence, it has sustained in Germany, in times of peace, that abnormal public opinion which in countries like ours is sustained only in times of war. It has taught the German people to think of might as the only measure of right and of war as a necessary element in the life of nations and an indispensable factor of "kultur." It has impressed upon them the duty of making aggressive war not only for the good of Germany, but for the good of the human race. And, teaching the vital importance of seizing "the most favorable moment" for beginning wars of conquest, it encouraged a Germany-wide toasting of "the Day" when the conquering movement should begin.

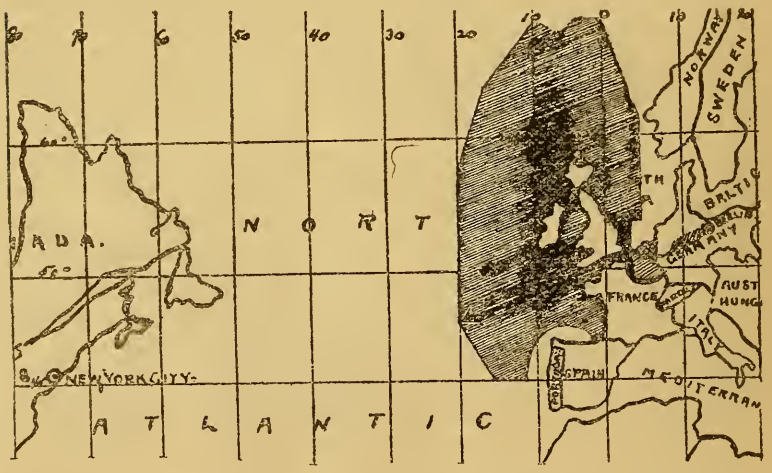
After more than 40 years of such preparation for forcibly extending Prussian imperialism over the world, "the Day"

came. The "most favorable moment" for further Prussian conquest was seen and seized by the military caste of the empire. The German Government, a young and vigorous despotism, armed to the teeth, was ready and eager to begin its next war of conquest. Russia, a decrepit autocracy, had but recently suffered military disaster. France, so far advanced from her old lust for revenge that the antiwar party had just won the parliamentary elections, was neither inclined to make a war nor prepared for waging one. Great Britain, her parties in power (Liberal, Labor, and Irish), all antiwar parties on the whole and in every respect the antithesis of the party in power in Germany—was averse to war and, without further preparation, hardly capable of successfully waging even defensive warfare. Circumstances had thus conspired to make this moment "the most favorable" possible for the German Government to begin its war move for world conquest. Had any doubt remained, an incident occurred to stifle it. Just at this "most favorable moment," when the German Government was hairtrigger ready for war, and France, the nation first to be crushed, was wholly unready, as was Great Britain also, a royal prince was assassinated. The crime was in no sense a cause for war; but to the German war lords it was a good enough excuse. As one member of the German Parliament dared to say to them with bitter irony, they welcomed that assassination as "a gift from heaven." A war of conquest was what they wanted, and a war of conquest they made. Had not "the Day" arrived? Was not "the most favorable moment" at hand?

In the twinkling of an eye the Kaiser's military machine assembled. Every man dropped into "his place" at the word. Almost before the western world suspected a possibility of war, the German Government had seized Belgium and sent a huge army of invasion on its conquering way toward Paris. In a month the invader was to have been again in that city which nearly 50 years before he had beleaguered and starved into surrender. From there he was to have offered a German peace. Its conditions would have been framed to crush France so completely that she could never resist a German march of conquest again. The least of its exactions would have been a strategic harbor on the

English channel—a point from which the next war of German conquest westward could be waged with advantage against Great Britain. And this German peace—a truce between conquests—would have endured until another "most favorable moment" for conquest had made further invasion by the German Government "necessary for the German people" and "the good of the human race." The treaty of peace would then have been another "scrap of paper."

But the unexpected happened. The efficient war machine somehow proved inefficient at a decisive moment. The German march of conquest from Berlin to the Atlantic coast was checked. Only checked, however, for the invader has not yet gone back into his own country. His war of con-



quest in western Europe still hangs in the balance. For three years he has occupied Belgium and northern France. His possession is without the slightest color of any right but military might. He can neither justify nor excuse his invasion by even the semblance of a defensive plea. His hold upon those countries accords with no other explanation than a stupendous attempt to realize in part his long-fostered policy of world conquest.

And now, pursuant to that policy and for its more complete realization, he has thrown his western battle line beyond Belgium, beyond France, beyond Great Britain, many leagues out upon the Atlantic Ocean toward the United States.

This advance of the German westward from his own frontiers into and through Belgium, into northern France, and, overleaping the rest of France, out upon the Atlantic to the twentieth meridian, is indicated by the shaded part of the accompanying map.

By the menacing extension of his battle line out upon the Atlantic Ocean toward the United States, and his claim to military sovereignty over the intervening waters, the German Kaiser challenged the United States to fight or fall back. He thereby claimed this area of the ocean as a Prussian lake. Had he won the European war he could have extended his claim to the whole ocean, unless we ourselves had subsequently broken the peace and made war upon him to recover what for the sake of peace with him we had unresistingly yielded at a more favorable time for defense. Had he lost the war, with what grace could we have claimed restoration by the victorious allies of the ocean rights which, during their war, we had yielded to their foe?

But our concern in the matter comes closer home even than that. When the Kaiser notified the Government of the United States that after February 1, 1917, he would sink at sight American vessels entering the ocean area indicated by the shaded parts of the map referred to, he *declared war* against the United States. When within that area he began sinking American vessels at sight, as he had notified our Government he would do, and killed American crews and passengers sailing on them under the American flag, he *made war* upon the United States. It was on his part invasive war, a war of conquest, precisely the kind of war upon this country which he had made two and a half years earlier upon Belgium and France.

Before that declaration of war and those acts of war, we had reason to fear the German Government, reason for indignation, reason for resentment. We might have gone to war with no slight reasons; and that we did not was because our Government was then, as it still is, under an administration which does not revel in thoughts of war; it abhors war. But when the German Government advanced its invasive battle line out upon the open Atlantic in our direction, asserting its sovereignty there as it was asserting it in Belgium and

northern France, and killing American citizens on American ships under the American flag upon waters where they had as good right to be as in their own cities, States or harbors, then a new element came into the case. Our Republic was invasively and defiantly put upon the defensive. The most pacific administration the United States has ever had could no longer keep us out of the war without putting us into national subjection to an alien power. The German Government had then left no alternative to this Government but war or surrender.

Our ships might indeed have stayed away from the ocean area over which the German Government thus asserted exclusive sovereignty. Their crews and passengers might have remained at home in obedience to the Kaiser's command. In obedience to that command our Government might have ordered them to do so. But none of this would have been any safer to our independence, any more in the interest of peace between this country and Germany, or any more reasonable on any count, than if the Kaiser had ordered us to stay off all the ocean outside our own territorial waters, and we had obeyed.

If the United States ought, in conscience or from policies of peace, to have yielded to the Kaiser's extension of his invasive battle line out upon the ocean to the twentieth meridian in our direction, we should have had no reason in conscience or peace policy for forcibly resisting its extension at the Kaiser's command to the thirtieth degree, nor to the sixtieth, nor even to the very 3-mile limit off our own coast line. There is no argument in opposition to our war against the German Kaiser as a war of self-defense which would not be as reasonable if, in his lust of world conquest, he were immediately approaching our water frontiers across the ocean, as almost three years ago, obsessed with that lust, he approached the land frontiers of France across Belgium.

Of course, on principles of nonresistance the United States would not be justified in either case. Nor should one be hasty to deny that nonresistance is good strategy as well as good morals. It has sanctions that can not be lightly ignored, and there are historical instances of its potency. At all events no high-minded person or noble-spirited people will countenance bullying denunciation or tolerate maltreat-

ment of those among them who preach and practice nonresistance. The memory of Tolstoy forbids. But the policy of national nonresistance to wars of conquest is not yet a social factor. Still feeling its way forward, the world is unappreciative of any better defense to invasive war than defensive war. As one of the most idealistic and deservedly influential newspapers of our country and time has phrased the thought, "The world has not reached the place where might can be met with argument, or where the wrath of nations can be turned away with a soft answer." It is by the test of the social toe mark of our own time that our war against the German invader must be tried; and by that test the war we wage is a necessary war because it is a war of national self-defense.

That there are more ideal justifications has been intimated above. Our war is no less just than necessary as a war of self-defense; and it is just also because it is a war in defense of the peaceable democracies of the world. This justification, eloquently made by the President in his war proclamation, can not be too often repeated, nor too clearly apprehended. "We are now about to accept gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty," said the President, "and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the Nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad, *now that we see the facts* with no veil of false pretense about them, to fight thus for *the ultimate peace of the world* and for the liberation of its peoples, the German people included; for *the rights of nations*, great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and obedience. *The world must be made safe for democracy*"—an injury to one is the concern of all. "Its peace must be planted upon the lasting foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion"—our war is not of the Prussianistic order. "We shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a *universal dominion of right* by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and *make the world itself at last free*."

Those are the ideals for which we are to struggle while in the war. They are the ideals for which we are to stand in adjusting terms of peace when the war is over. And they are none the less genuine because in our war struggle in their behalf we temporarily suspend our own guaranties of individual liberty in order to make the war effective as our people would have it, instead of a failure as the war lords of Germany would like it to be. This is part of the necessary cost of all wars for democracy. Our Revolutionary War, with its democratic purpose and outcome, could not have been won by democratic methods. The French Revolution, with its democratic aspirations and its overthrow of ancient feudalism, was it not sustained coercively? Our Civil War for a "government of the people, for the people, and by the people" was not prosecuted in very strict accordance with democratic forms or deference to democratic guaranties. It is not, however, with the higher ideals for which we are now at war that this discussion is especially concerned, except as they may be involved in the necessity for defending ourselves against an invading foe. Back of those ideals are the plain workaday facts to which the President referred as the moving cause of our going into the war, when he advised Congress that "the recent course of the Imperial German Government" had been "in fact nothing less than *war against the Government and people of the United States.*"

On those facts, the Congress of the United States, the only authority known to our fundamental law for such action, and through the only process that would have been binding upon our Government, accepted the war challenge of the German Kaiser. No referendum could have had any legal force. Nor would it have had any probable advisory value. It would only have offered another opportunity for Prussian diplomacy. The obligation was upon Congress; the only power to decide was in Congress; the only available reflection of public opinion short of revolution was through Congress. And Congress accepted this challenge of war. It did so in no private interest but in the public interest. It did so because the German Government was making actual war upon the Government and people of the United States.

The challenge was not accepted while it remained a "scrap of paper." But when this challenge of war was vitalized by deeds of war, when in accordance with its terms of defiance American ships were sunk and American lives were taken under the American flag by the Government of Germany within an ocean area on which the rights of this country are as indefeasible as its rights to its own territory, but over which the German Government had invasively assumed exclusive sovereignty, then Congress accepted the challenge of war.

There was no possible alternative. This self-constituted enemy of ours, after long fostering a policy of conquest, had actually invaded Belgium and France pursuant to that policy. By that long-fostered policy, he had proved his invasive intent. By his actual invasion he had transmuted invasive intent into invasive action. By his diplomatic negotiations with Mexico and his operations within the United States he had disclosed his invasive intent toward the United States itself as one of the objectives of his general policy. By throwing his invasive battle line out upon the ocean to the twentieth meridian, in the direction of the United States, with a threat to the United States, he confirmed his hostile intent toward this country. His destruction of American ships and American lives under the American flag within that ocean area was the overt act of his aggressive war upon the United States. For us to have ignored the manifest intent after it had been vitalized by the overt act would have been to surrender at discretion. So our war with the autocratic German Government, if it involved no ideals at all of the loftier or less selfish type, would nevertheless be justified as a necessary war of national self-defense.

We are resisting invasion as truly as if our call to arms had been to check a hostile army marching northward through Mexico or southward from Quebec. And in sending soldiers to France to help the French, the British, and the Belgians drive the invader away from their home countries and back into his, we are defending our own home country under the same necessity as if we were advancing into Canada or Mexico to meet an approaching army of conquest. While the German Kaiser is in France or Belgium he is a menace to the United States, now that he has demonstrated his

hostile intent toward this country; and no peace can be made with safety to our independence until he has left the places he has invaded and gone back to his own frontiers.

It might possibly have been better to assent to his conquering the world, nation by nation, until our turn came, than to enter into the awful carnage which resistance to his foul ambitions demands; but that was not the question. We were not confronted with a problem of war or no war. Our problem was one of resisting conquest now, in a war in Europe and with allies, or later on in our own country and without allies.

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